

**PREPARED REMARKS OF
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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION**

**NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE “CONNECTING THE DOTS” REPORT RELEASE
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In committing to Connect 2 Compete, NCTA and the cable industry are taking a stand for consumers, and a stand for the economy.

Connect 2 Compete is an unprecedented coalition of private companies and non-profits working together to tackle the three primary obstacles to broadband adoption: cost, digital literacy and the fact that many Americans don't recognize the value of broadband.

On cost, thanks to NCTA member companies and Connect 2 Compete, broadband will be available to millions of low-income families at \$9.95 a month – about 1/3 of what it otherwise can cost.

On digital literacy, libraries across the country, along with companies like Microsoft and Best Buy's Geek Squads will be teaching basic digital skills. At the FCC, we have proposed using savings from universal service reform to increase digital literacy training at schools and libraries.

Today's report speaks to the last barrier I mentioned – demonstrating the relevance and value of broadband to non-adopters.

This report reminds us that, at the end of the day, Connect 2 Compete is not just a broadband adoption initiative.

It's not just an education initiative, a health care initiative, and a public safety initiative, Connect 2 Compete is a jobs initiative.

According to today's report, 77% of African-Americans have used broadband to search for jobs.

Programs like the Central Florida Urban League's Job Training are helping participants find jobs through digital skills training.

Today, almost all Fortune 500 companies post their jobs openings only online. And they require online job applications – from Wal-Mart to Exxon Mobil.

In today's world, you need broadband to find a job and apply for a job, because companies increasingly require online applications.

Being connected not only allows you to search for jobs, it can also help you develop basic digital skills -- like how to prepare and upload your resume online.

Digital literacy is increasingly essential in the job market. More than half of today's jobs require some technology skills – this percentage projects to grow to over 75% in the next decade.

Today's report demonstrates that we're making progress in our efforts to connect all Americans to the digital age and to job opportunities.

It found that the adoption gap between whites and African-Americans has been nearly cut in half since 2009.

And I want to commend the Urban League and other civil rights groups for all they are doing to help make this progress possible.

But the report also clearly illustrates that, despite progress, too many Americans are being bypassed by these digital opportunities.

Roughly 1 in 3 Americans – nearly 100 million Americans – still haven't adopted broadband at home.

And nearly half of African-Americans still find themselves on the wrong side of the broadband divide.

We can't afford this.

We can't afford a broadband divide in America. Having swaths of our nation on the wrong side of this divide is not good for those individuals and not good for our country and our ability to compete in a global economy.

These Americans are excluded from the \$8 trillion dollar global Internet economy, and all of its benefits.

In the 21st century, having one-third of Americans sitting on the sidelines is as unthinkable as having one-third of our country without electricity in the 20th.

Millions being left out of jobs, left out of digital learning, is not just an economic issue; it's a civil rights issue.

We need to close the broadband adoption gap and make sure every American can enjoy the benefits of high-speed Internet. That's what this report is about.

That's what Connect 2 Compete is about.

And that is why we've focused the FCC on broadband – developing the First National Broadband Plan, modernizing and reforming major programs like the Universal Service Fund, E-Rate and Lifeline to make broadband more accessible, unleashing spectrum for both licensed and unlicensed mobile broadband use to spur mobile innovation, preserving the free and open Internet for innovative entrepreneurs and all consumers, and removing barriers to broadband buildout, so that communications infrastructure companies can invest with confidence in robust wired and wireless networks.

Thank you again to Mayor Morial, Michael Powell and Fernando Laguado for all you are doing to close the broadband adoption gap and connect America.